The Old Blue Chest.

ONE day last week five or six women with serious faces and hushed voices were gathered in a room in a house on Fort Street. For two years a poor old woman had lived there, not exactly a beggar nor an object of charity, but certainly in want. She had a husband when she first moved there—a poor old man whose days could not be long; but one day he was missing. He may have fallen into the river, or he may have wandered out into the country and died. This left the old woman alone, and there were days and days in which no one went near her or addressed her. The other day when she felt the chill of death approaching she wanted some one with her. She had lived alone, but she could not die that way. She wept as tender hands clasped hers and kind voices addressed her. Death had already placed its mark on her face, and the women could do nothing. While their tears fell upon her wrinkled hands she passed away as a child sleeps.

There was but little in the room beyond an old chest—battered and bruised and splintered, but yet holding together. It had seen strange times, that old blue chest. It had held silks and broadcloths perhaps—it had surely held rags. It had been moved from house to house and from town to town. It had listened to laughter, and had heard sobs and moans. It had grown old no faster than the woman whose hands had so often lifted its lid. It had doubtless kept the company of good carpets and furniture and crockery, and laughing, romping children had climbed over it or hidden in it. It had faded, and its hinges were rusty and weak, but it had outlived its owner.

The women looked about for garments in which to enshroud the dead. Nothing was in sight. One of them lifted the lid of the old blue chest, and called the others to help drag it out from its dark corner. It held treasure—such treasure as men could not buy nor poverty steal away. There was a dress of fine material, cut after a fashion of long years ago. For twenty years the chest had been its guardian. It would have sold for a few dollars, but though the gnawings of hunger had come often and the cold had fought its way to her marrow, that poor old woman would not part with that relic of better days. It may have been a link to connect her with wealth and love. Beneath it was treasure still more priceless. Carefully wrapped in paper was a silver dime more than fifty years old. A week's fast would not have sent her to the baker's with that relic. A child, dead in its young years, had worn that dime around its neck as a gift or talisman. There was a child's mitten, stained and worn, but a mitten knit by a proud young mother for her child. It could not speak to tell the dim past, but it had power. As the women saw it they covered their faces with their aprons and wept.

There was a boy's cap and a girl's hat, both so old and faded and time-eaten that they had to be tenderly handled. The women looked from them to the poor old white face on the bed and whispered:

"None but a good mother would have treasured these relics. She was old and poor, her heart was pure."

Deeper down, as if to baffle the search of Time itself, was a familiar toy—a child's dumb watch. Hands were broken and gone, face scratched and case battered, but the women handled it as if a touch would shiver it. There was a doll's head, a boy's fish-line, some toy chairs, a yarn ball, and other things to show that in the long ago that dead woman had felt the soft kisses of children, heard their "good night" and thanked God that she was blessed. Each relic was wept over—each was replaced with fresh tear stains. They asked the old blue chest no questions. Its relics might have been voiceless to a man, but to a woman and mother each one had a tale in words as plain as print. They shed more tears as they bent again over the poor old dead, and they said to each other:

"If she had only told us of this how we would have loved her and sought to lighten her sorrows."

But she had gone. She had come and gone as a mystery, and but for the old blue chest in the corner few would have cared, and none would have sorrowed.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Woman's Work.

IT is very hard to understand how the mass of men live in this or in any large city, where everything, from a wink of sleep to a mouthful of food, must always be paid for. But it is much harder to understand how women eke out a subsistence; for they have far less strength, inferior health, and generally much lower wages. It is estimated that some 60,000 women in and about this city alone earn their own living, and that the number steadily increases from year to year. They are of all grades, from servants to fashionable modistes, book-keepers, artists and managers. A number of them are members of intellectual professions, such as medicine, journalism, lecturing, acting. Not a few of them earn a good deal of money, notably actresses, milliners and dress-makers, and often they acquire a handsome independence. The profits of actresses are probably higher than those of any other feminine calling; then come milliners, and next dress-makers. Lecturers have hitherto made considerable money—Anna Dickinson cleared, it is said, $40,000 in one year—but recently the public has cared very little for them, the business having been overdone and the quality of the lectures having grown very poor. A number of women who have done very well at it have been obliged to retire from the field for lack of patronage. Actresses, on the other hand, command higher salaries and secure more lucrative positions than ever. But they must have some talent, some power of attraction. They can not, as many women believe, rush upon the stage without any mental endowment, and get suddenly rich. Milliners and modistes, after they have gained a fashionable reputation, thrive famously; but they are necessarily few. The bulk of the sex employed as seamstresses, saleswomen, teachers—the teachers who do well are exceptional—copyists, and the like, get very meager compensation. It is calculated that, of the 60,000 feminine workers, the average earning is not over $4 to $4.50 a week. How they can pay their board or purchase food and shelter with such a pittance eludes comprehension. And then, it should be remembered that the majority of them provide for others as well as for themselves; for it is a general rule that anybody who can earn money is sure to have dependents. Ordinary servants, of whom very few are Americans, are said to be more comfortable than educated and refined laborers of native stock. They get from $2.50 to $4 a week, and have good food and lodging included, which is a most important consideration. While many American women materially improve their condition by going into kitchens, they shrink from doing so because it seems menial, and our born republicans hate to be menials. For a woman to earn her own living is far harder than shows on the surface. To some women it is little less than tragical.—*New York Times.*

An Artist who Paints Blackened Eyes After Election.

ON the Monday before election men bearing large banners whereon pictures of a battered human eye were painted patrolled the down-town streets. Around the battered eye on each banner were the words:

> Black Eyes painted during the election, 25 cents and 50 cents. 182 Canal Street.

Mr. Hubbs, sign painter, is the employer of these banner-bearers. He has devoted a quarter of a century to the restoration of unlucky eyes, and his son says that in his prime the old artist had no equal. An eye that would humiliate a less skillful artist was a trifle to him, while the countenance of a person who had engaged in a controversy with the Bottle Alley Gang was a treat to the old man. But age has told on the painter. His son has succeeded him, at least so far as the upper class of fifty-cent eyes go. The customers brought about the young man's promotion. A young Broadway merchant brought a peculiarly ornate eye to the paint shop on his way to business, and found young Hubbs in charge. The eye was like a cross between a rainbow and an archery target in appearance. The painter could see by the man's dress and appearance that it was a half-dollar eye. He did his very best, and the young merchant came every morning for several days to have the chromo freshened up. One day the young merchant found the senior decorator in charge. Mr. Hubbs prepared his background with all his old skill; then he mixed his tints and laid them on so as to bring out the light and shade in a masterly manner. The trouble must have been with the perspective, young Mr. Hubbs thinks, for the young merchant grumbled a great deal, and soon afterward came back and ordered a new picture by the young man.

"I have studied with first-class artists," said young Hubbs, yesterday; "I have painted at the Academy of Music and other places. A man has got to be trained to it in order to do fine work like this."

"Why do you advertise to paint eyes during election?"

"Oh, well, it isn't exactly election," said Mr. Hubbs, "it's more the day after election that we get the most of them. We used to be down at 230 Canal Street, near Centre Street, and I can remember when I was a boy the black eyes used to stand up in a line the day after election and father would take 'em one after another as fast as he could. These customers were all hard young men, but we have all classes. Day before yesterday we had a broker from Wall Street, and just before that a young well-dressed lady. She said she had fallen against a ferryboat, and the broker said he got hit in the back of the neck. Both his eyes were black and blue. 'That's funny,' says I, 'that you should get hit in the back of the neck and get two black eyes by it.' 'I know it's funny,' says he, 'but there are the eyes.'

"Of course it's nonsense," continued young Mr. Hubbs, "but of all the black eyes I've painted I never got one that was caused by a fight. They all come in some strange and mysterious way."

Mr. Hubbs said that it had been found that you could not paint the same thing on every face. The basis of all the paintings is the same, but the superstructure varies with the subject's complexion. The basis is a careful mixture of white, vermilion, chrome yellow, and burnt umber. A pale-faced man will take extra white and extra yellow; a dark man extra umber, and a rosy-cheeked person calls for extra vermilion skillfully laid in on the lower edge of the picture and thinning out into white or pink, according to the complexion. Oil paints are used, and chalk is rubbed on to rid the painting of its gloss. The only trouble is that dust dirties the picture, and spoils it in three days. Hot water will wash it off.—*New York Sun.*

Ancient Egypt.

OF all the curious works of the ancient Egyptians, the most strange and dream-like are the sphinxes. They are innumerable along the Nile, half man, half beast, carved in solid stone. But one—known as the Sphinx—the largest and most wonderful, sits near the Pyramids, with staring stone eyes that seem to have almost learned to see. It is half buried in the sands. Its head rises more than sixty feet above its base. Whole avenues of sphinxes lined the courts of the Egyptian temples. Then there are the tombs, or catacombs, where the mummies are preserved—long galleries cut in the rock, decorated with paintings, covered with the dust of generations. Along the river these cemeteries are almost numberless. On the walls are drawn all the various occupations of the people. The fisherman is seen drawing his nets, the plowman driving his team, the soldier returning from the war. But the most curious of the catacombs are those devoted to the preservation of the mummies of cats, bulls, birds of all kinds, and crocodiles. The Egyptians worshiped animals and birds, and when they died, preserved their bodies by a singular process. The bull (Apis) was adored at Memphis, and his death was a season of general woe. When a cat in a house at Thebes died, all the family went in mourning, and shaved their eyebrows.—*Harper's Young People.*

Farmers' Homes.

THE farming class, as a whole, is looked at in different aspects, according to the point of view of the observer. Some consider farmers the most favored of mortals; assume that they lead an idyllic life; have but few cares and responsibilities, and their lives are passed in breathing the perfumed breath of fancy cattle, and making and eating gilt-edged butter, with bread and honey! These ideas emanate usually from "city folks," who, glad to be relieved from the imprisonment, and stale garbage of cities, imagine every thing in the country paradisiacal, and babble only of brooks and green fields. Others, and they are the majority, consider the life of a farmer too isolated, and his work too continuous; are sorry for his wife, who works from morn to eve, and for his children, who have too few companions; and, comparing his condition with that of the artisan or mechanic, would prefer the social lives of the latter to the more solitary existence of the dweller on the farm. In fact, in the Eastern and Middle States, there is a golden mean between these two extreme views, and the well-to-do farmer is neither above nor below his fellows in this matter of conditioned society, enjoyments and health, and it is his own fault if he finds or makes life irksome, or his family are wretched and discontented. The farmer, of course, is not to be compared, in this matter of affluence, with the limited number who thrive and grow rich by trade, commerce, and speculation; but, entering the lists with the large majority who toil and spin for a living, his life is seen to advantage, and his opportunities for enjoyment and improvement, as well as comfort, are usually superior. Neither he nor his family is tied down to continuous drudgery, if honest labor may be so designated, as is the mechanic in the various branches of manufacturing; the clerks and salesmen in the marts of commerce, or even the professional men in cities and large towns. The farmer does not receive, perhaps, in actual money, the same nor as large an annual amount as the mechanic or petty tradesman, but he gets its equivalent in the owning of the house he occupies and the products of his farm, and then, instead of being tied down every day to one kind of labor, he has a variety of employments, and he and his family can drive out, make calls, visit on the way, and control their own time with a much greater latitude than the workers in mechanical employments and trades. The farmer is no better nor worse than his fellow men who compose the great masses; and there are farmers who get rich by their employments, though the large majority do as the greater number of other workers, that is, live moderately, keep their heads above water, and leave but a small patrimony to their children; but usually that consists of a house, which prevents the survivors from being turned out to the cold comforts of the world, as is too often the case with the widows and children of others.

The great disadvantages of farming life heretofore have been its isolation; too many burdens thrown upon the women; too little recreation allowed the children, and bad diet. The encroachments of population, the propinquity of railroads, and the consequent more frequent gathering of the peoples together, the invention of machinery, the teachings of the newspapers and of the lecturers have in a great measure modified these evils, and the farmer is now in all respects upon a par with all other citizens, and it is his own fault if he does not improve his advantages. In the matter of food he is yet behind the age, bringing up his family too much on pork and pastry, which his out-door life enables *him* to digest, but which imparts to the other inmates of the house their pallid and spotted countenances, and to their bodies an unnecessary attenuation. Everywhere else, even in small towns, and in the families of city mechanics, one will find the children, especially, breakfasting on oatmeal and fruits, eschewing pies and sweets at dinners, and making the last meal a light one, whilst the New England farmer yet compels his wife to keep him supplied with pies *ad libitum*, and, worse than that, to make pork the principal meat diet, and to bring up their children upon the same rigid fare, which fits them in adult life to be apt candidates for "treason, stratagem and spoils."

Some one has said that if he could write the songs of a nation, he cared not who made its laws, and we might emulate that by remarking that, let us feed the people and furnish their drinks, and we would answer for all the mischief and misery which they would be capable of doing. A people temperate in eating and drinking are sure to be well behaved, and it was no useless allegory which derived all consequent evils to the human race, from an abuse of appetite.

Our farmers' sons, too, need some refining process which will divest them of a coarseness not natural, but acquired from bad associations, and make them equal in all respects to the best about them. We have observed a great change in this respect of late years, and now that there is a free high school in every town, there should be no cause for their failing to get the advantage of a good education, which will tone down all their roughness. There is no sufficient reason why farmers, their wives and children should, in any respect, with all the advantages to be derived from their associations and the society about them, be "different from other folks;" or, why, with the agricultural and other papers to instruct them, and their own good sense to profit thereby, they and their families should not walk in the new paths.

The head of the house should reserve some time from manual labor for mental improvement and recreation; the mothers, now that the great burdens are thrown off their shoulders, by the employment of machinery on the farm, should, as their grandmothers did in the olden time, set apart certain hours for hospitality and instruction of their children, and neighborly visiting. The girls and boys should have the benefit of the best education the towns afford; the diet and manners of the whole family should be refined, and all and each should consider and realize that they are capable of being among the superior classes, in all that may become true men and women, and not merely coarse workers and coarse thinkers, actors and talkers. There is yet room for improvement, but a keen observer can not fail to notice that, under the humanizing influences of the press, the lecture, the farmers' clubs and institutes, farmers, as a class, are now a great deal in advance of their immediate predecessors, in attention to the true ways of living.—*Cor. New England Farmer.*

Advice to a Boy of Fourteen.

THE letter of "A Boy of 14" would have been answered two weeks ago were it not for an unfortunate lack of data on the subjects inquired about. One of the most solemn duties in life is the giving of correct advice to an inquiring lad of the bright and hopeful age of 14. A wrong start here may embitter a whole life. After due reflection we incline to the opinion that "A Boy of 14" should rather choose the career of a pirate than that of a highwayman. The telegraph and the steam engine have so encroached on the business of the latter that it is next to impossible to make more than a decent living on the road. The great and revered men of to-day—in the halls of Congress and elsewhere—who owe their success in life to a start as robbers can be counted on the fingers of one band. Besides, the business is very trying to the constitution; few live to old age who follow it steadily. On the contrary pirating is a sort of continual yachting expedition. The telegraph can not harm you, nor the locomotive overtake you. There is very little competition in the business, pirating being now chiefly confined to dramatic writing; in fact, it presents, at present, quite a good opening for an energetic young man who is not liable to sea-sickness. As to the best method of entering the profession that is greatly a matter of circumstances. If the father, or friends of "A Boy of 14," are wealthy, he might get them to give him a start in life. He could pay the sum advanced from his first season's work. He would get a low, rakish craft, tolerably cheap, as soon as the season is closed, and fit her up during the winter. Cutlasses are cheap by the dozen, and a supply of rope for hanging prisoners could be purchased at any of the ship-chandler offices. A black flag is also indispensable. A good reliable pirate can be hired at from $1.25 to $2.50 a day, according to the season, board and washing included, although the latter item will not be a heavy one. Of course, pirates with special gifts in the matter of swearing, who can hold a dripping knife in their teeth, while, with a revolver in one hand and a cutlass in the other, they board a Lake Superior steamer, cost more than those cheap pirates that now frequent the wharves. No, the Detroit River would not be a good business stand. You might break windows in the city, and this would annoy people. Still, it would not be a bad place to stay in and spot your craft. You could follow the boat up to Lake St. Clair and scuttle it there, taking care, of course, to sink her out of the regular track of passing vessels. It might be prudent to commence on some wood-scow and gradually work up to a good paying business on the Union Steamboat Company, Northern Transit boats and such vessels. Of course success in this vocation, as in all others, depends on enterprise, application, perseverance and sterling honesty.—*Detroit Free Press.*

"Let Politics Alone."

A REAL clean, nice-looking old couple were at the Union Depot yesterday to take a train going South. The husband was nearly 70 years old and pretty lively, and the wife was only a year or two behind him, with a voice that meant business every time she opened her mouth. There was considerable political talk around the depot, and the old man at once became interested.

"I've been over in Canada in the woods for the last two weeks, and I hain't heard a thing," he exclaimed. "Is the 'lection over with?"

"Yes," replied one of the men.

"Many riots and knock-downs?"

"Thousands of them."

"I used to be the worst man around the polls you ever see," continued the old man as he spit on his hands. "I've seen the time it took four constables to hold me."

"Peter, what are you doing here?" asked the old lady, as she suddenly appeared.

"Finding out about politics."

"What kind?"

"All kinds."

"Well, you let politics alone and come into the waiting-room."

"Purty soon. So they had riots and knock-downs, eh? Lord! don't I wish I had been around!"

"Peter!" called the wife.

"Yes, I'm here. I suppose the candidates set up the drinks, didn't they?"

"O, yes."

"Great shakes! But I wish I'd been over here. Take it along about forty years ago, and after I had three drinks down it took the whole Whig party to hold me. My great hold was in cleaning out the voting place and walking off with the ballot-box."

"Peter, I want you!" called the wife.

"Yes, Nancy. Well, which side"—

Peter was choked off right there. Nancy got hold of his collar and lifted his heels off the floor, whirled him around, and headed him for the waiting-room with the remark:

"After you have lived with me another forty years you'll learn that when I say Peter I don't mean Paul! The idea of your standing out here and talking politics when we've got to look around for a piece of bed-cord to tie that old satchel up or lose half our duds! Pike!"

When they came out to take the train the old man had his eye out, and seeing the man who had answered his question, he asked:

"Who did you say was 'lected?"

He was yet on the last word when the wife brought her bandbox down on top his head with the exclamation:

"Shet up!"

That "shet" him. He looked back once with a sorrowful, injured air, but she punched him in the back with the box, and he humbly entered the car and was driven into the seat on the side next to the dark wall.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—There were five funerals in De Pere, Wis., the other day, all resulting from diphtheria.

Our Young Folks.

THE GRAND PROCESSION.

ELSIE BAKER was sitting on a log in the wood-shed, gloomily listening to her brother Joe, who was talking with much enthusiasm.

"For I tell you, sir," said he to Elsie, "it isn't every boy who'll get a chance to be in that procession to-night, sir. There'll be a thousand torches, and speeches, and fire-works; and the train leaves Porter's Corner at six o'clock; and Mr. Hill says to me, 'You be on hand, Joe, you and Jack Stone, and you may go to Portland along of the "Continentals" and march each side of the flag, and wear white rubber capes, and carry a torch apiece if you like.' It's to be the biggest show of the season, and—"

"I can't go," burst in Elsie. "Just because I'm a girl I can never go anywhere or see anything."

"Of course not," assented Joe, cheerfully. "Girls never can. I go because father's in Ohio, and I'm the man of the family. I declare I shouldn't wonder if half the people in Portland should think Jack and I could vote when they see us *percessing*. Three cheers for Hanfield!"

Hanfield? Hanfield? That did not sound quite right. Joe meditated. Hanfield? Well, never mind. There was no time to waste over names. If Joe would help toward the election of a President of the United States he must be off and away for Jack Stone, or the two would miss the train.

And Elsie? Poor little Elsie was left forlorn. She was quite alone, for her mother had gone to visit a sick neighbor, and would not even be at home for tea.

"Oh, *why* shouldn't a girl do just what her brother does, and have some fun?" thought Elsie, bitterly. "Or else why wasn't I born a boy?"

She sat close to the andirons in front of the wood fire, and more and more dismal did she grow. She had nearly come to wondering whether it was really worth while to live if one had to be only a girl, when the front door burst open, and in bounced Master Joe.

"Elsie," cried he, grasping her by the arm, "here's your chance. You can go."

"Go? go?" repeated Elsie, flushing crimson with excitement.

Joe hurried on. "Jack Stone's sick. Earache—both ears—onions on 'em—here's his cap—who'll know you're not a boy?—tuck up your skirts—on with this big cape—come!"

Elsie was beside herself. "Mother wouldn't let me," she half gasped.

"Did she ever say you mustn't?" argued Joe. "Like as not we'll be back before she is. Don't be a goose. There's no time to talk. Hurry! hurry! You won't get such another chance."

Down the road they flew, and reached the station just as the "Continentals" came marching up with fife and drum.

"Here we are, Mr. Hill," said Joe, presenting himself and his companion.

"All right," said Mr. Hill, too busy to pay much attention. "Keep with the rest of the men. How are you, Jack, my boy?"

There was no time for the make-believe "Jack, my boy," to answer. The engine was puffing and panting. Elsie was swung on the train, where Joe and she tucked themselves away on a back seat.

The "Continentals" were in the best of humor, so were the "Philbrick Pioneers," who, gorgeous in their Zouave regimentals, came crowding into the car at the next station, to crack jokes and talk politics. Pretty soon the train stopped with a jerk, and everybody was out in a twinkling.

There were shouts of command. The "Continentals" and "Pioneers" fell into line. Torches were lit. A host of boys set up shrill yells. Joe and Elsie were twitched into place by energetic Mr. Hill, and ordered to hold up their heads and keep time to the music.

"Isn't it fun?" thought Elsie, stepping briskly along, and grasping her torch with both hands.

If one hundred torches were "fun," what could be said when they reached Market Square, where the grand procession was to form, and where there was a blaze of light such as Elsie had never imagined! Bands were playing, horses were prancing; some one set fire to a sort of powder, and lo! the whole street was rosy red.

Now everything was ready and the march began. Whole blocks on each side were festooned with bunting and Chinese lanterns; candles twinkled in every pane; all the gas burners did their best; Roman candles shot out colored stars; rockets went up with a fizz.

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" The procession was pausing in front of a big house. Somebody was making a speech. Nobody could understand half he said. No matter. "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" Elsie shouted with the rest, and trotted gaily on.

"No reason in the world I shouldn't have come, like any other boy! Hurrah!"

Up one street and down another, each more brilliant than the last, Elsie marched on, till suddenly a small, then a larger, pain began to make itself felt in one of her feet.

"It's my new boots," said she to herself. "Why didn't I change them?" I'll stamp hard and then I shall be easy."

But somehow she was not easy. Up one street, down another. It was not so much the pain in one particular spot now as the general ache, not only in her foot, but in her whole body.

"I'm afraid I'm growing tired."

She glanced at Joe. That worthy was in high spirits, and apparently as fresh as ever. Elsie limped bravely on. Across an open space the procession wheeled, and halted again to drink lemonade out of big tubs on the sidewalk. Elsie ventured to complain to Joe.

"Oh, cheer up!" was all the comfort he had for her. "We've marched 'most half the distance now."

"'Most half the distance!" Why, Elsie could never hold out if that were the case. Once more she struggled on. It seemed as if she had been marching for years and years ever since she was a baby. She could not drag herself another inch. In the midst of a cheer she crept up a flight of steps, and sank down.

"I'll wait a few minutes, and then run fast, and catch Joe again," thought she.

The next moment, as it seemed, she heard two voices near her.

"The party must be hard up that has to take babies like this to help on their cause," said one.

"Poor little fellow!" answered the other—a lady "He's dropped down, torch and all, and gone to sleep."

Elsie started and looked around her. Where was the procession? Where was Joe? Too terrified to say a word, up the street she rushed, gazing wildly on this side and on that. No Joe did she see, no procession either. It would have been quite dark but for the street lamps.

"I must stop somewhere. I must ask some one for Joe."

At a house smaller than the others she paused, and rang the bell. There was a confused sound of talking within.

"Don't you open that door as you value your life, Phœbe Maria," said some one, in shrill tones. "Us all alone! This time of night! It's tramp, sure!"

Then Phœbe Maria called through the key-hole, "Go right away. I sha'n't let you in if you stop there till midnight. De-part!"

I think if the word "de-*part*" had not sounded so very ponderous, Elsie would have called back that she was no tramp. As it was, she ran blindly on.

"Mother! mother!" she sobbed, wringing her little cold hands. But no one answered. A clock near by tolled nine, ten, eleven. Two drops of rain fell. The wind rustled drearily among the tree-tops.

Steps sounded near. A tall man approached, and Elsie caught the gleam of brass buttons.

"What are you doing here, boy?" demanded the newcomer, in a great bass voice.

"I'm not a boy," cried Elsie. "I never was a boy in all my life. I'm Elsie Baker. I want to go home."

She quite broke down, and wept piteously.

"Hoity-toity!" exclaimed the man, who was one of the police. "Where is your home?"

"Out at Porter's Corner. Joe brought me to the percession. I wish he hadn't. I wish— Oh dear, dear me!"

"Now here's a pretty mess!" said the policeman. "There's nothing for it but to take charge o' you to-night, and see how we can manage to-morrow. You come along with me."

Finding the child too exhausted to walk, he picked her up and tramped off down in town with his burden. Where did he carry her?

To tell the truth there seemed to be no other place, and he took her to the public "lock-up."

Elsie was too worn and spent to mind; too hungry was she not to devour eagerly the bit of salt fish and hard cracker which her new friend gave her; then, forgetting her woes, she fell asleep once more, safely wrapped in his warm overcoat.

But, in the morning, waking in a strange place, all the terror of last night came upon her once more. Through an open door she dared like a startled hare, and when No. 11 came, an hour later, to find her, no child was visible. All that was left was the small rubber cape with its red collar.

"I must find some cars," thought Elsie. "I can't get home unless I find some cars."

It must have been her guardian angel who led the little girl, for, as she walked hastily along, right in front of her loomed up a big building, in and out of which locomotives were running.

"Would you please point out the train for Porter's Corner?" said Elsie, tremblingly approaching a man who was pushing round some trunks.

"Bless you! you're at the wrong station for that, sissy or bby, whichever you be," said the man, glancing from the girl's dress to the boy's cap. "But there," added he, as the brown eyes filled with tears, "a gravel train's just going across the city to the Eastern Depot. Come with me, and I'll take you there."

Down the track Elsie rode, perched on a heap of gravel.

"I cal'late you've got a ticket for Porter's Corner?" said her companion.

Here was fresh trouble. No ticket had she, and, what was worse, not a penny to buy one.

"You don't mean to say you're going to *steal* a ride!" exclaimed the man.

Very likely this was meant for a joke, but Elsie took it for sober earnest. She had been called a "tramp" last night; now she was taken for a thief. It was too dreadful. She looked here and there, if perchance there might be some way of escape from all this misery, and suddenly—why!—what!—that boy on the platform of the Eastern Depot—could it be?

"Joe! Joe!" shrieked Elsie.

It was Joe; a very wretched Joe, a Joe who had not slept a wink all night, though he had gone home in a vain hope he might find the missing sister there.

He saw Elsie. He sprang toward her. He clambered on the car almost before it stopped. He hugged her, he kissed her. Boy though he was, he wept great tears over her. Then he took her by both shoulders and shook her.

"Oh, you bad girl! Where have you been? You've frightened mother 'most to death. Elsie, Elsie, what *made* you come to Portland?"

"You brought me, Joe," said Elsie, humbly.

Home they went, the two. At the Porter's Corner Station they found every man and woman of the village, and to each severally was Elsie told her story. Her mother never said a word. She only clasped Elsie tighter and tighter, while the tears streamed down her cheeks.

But Joe!—oh, Joe did talking enough for all. The lofty sentiments that flowed from the lips of that virtuous youth were truly refreshing. His own share in last night's adventures had quite slipped his mind. He felt called upon, as "the man of the family," to exhort his sister at length in regard to her manners and morals.

"And now, Elsie Baker," he ended, "I hope you see why girls can't do as boys do. I could have marched for a week and not been tired. I hope you'll remember this the next time you want to tag on when I'm going anywhere."

And Elsie was actually so tired that she hadn't the spirit to answer a word.—*Mary Densel, in Harper's Young People.*